

CLAIMS

What is claimed:

1. A breath collection system for use in obtaining metabolic measurements from an individual's respiration, comprising:
a breathing apparatus configured to communicate with at least a mouth of the individual; and
a conduit including a first end coupled to said mouthpiece and a second end configured to be coupled to apparatus for monitoring the individual's respiration, said conduit including at least a section that is configured to be placed into a desired configuration and that substantially maintains said desired configuration until placed in another desired configuration.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein said breathing apparatus comprises a mouthpiece.
3. The system of claim 2, wherein said mouthpiece comprises a breathing end configured to be at least partially inserted into the mouth of the individual.
4. The system of claim 3, wherein said mouthpiece comprises a conduit coupling section oriented in an at least partially downwardly extending direction relative to said breathing end, said conduit-receiving extension being configured to be coupled to said first end of said conduit.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein said breathing apparatus comprises a mask configured to be placed over at least the mouth of the individual.
6. The system of claim 1, wherein said breathing apparatus comprises:
at least one inlet valve; and
at least one outlet valve.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein said at least one inlet valve comprises a one-way valve that facilitates introduction of gases to be inhaled by the individual into said breathing apparatus.

8. The system of claim 6, wherein said at least one inlet valve opens upon application of a negative pressure within said breathing apparatus.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein said at least one outlet valve comprises a one-way valve that facilitates evacuation of the individual's expiratory gases from said breathing apparatus.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said at least one outlet valve opens upon application of a positive pressure within said breathing apparatus.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein said at least one outlet valve is positioned on said at least one of a conduit coupling section of said breathing apparatus and an end of said conduit.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein at least said section of said conduit comprises a longitudinally expandable and collapsible member.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein said longitudinally expandable and collapsible member comprises a section of corrugated tubing.

14. The system of claim 1, wherein at least said section of said conduit carries at least one elongate compliant member.

15. A breathing conduit, comprising:

a first end configured to be coupled to a breathing apparatus that is capable of communicating with at least a mouth of an individual;

a second end configured to be coupled to apparatus for monitoring the individual's respiration;

and

at least a section located between said first end and said second end and which is configured to be placed into a desired configuration and that substantially maintains said desired configuration until placed in another desired configuration.

16. The breathing conduit of claim 15, wherein at least said section is at least partially longitudinally collapsible and at least partially longitudinally expandable.

17. The breathing conduit of claim 16, wherein at least said section comprises corrugated tubing.

18. The breathing conduit of claim 15, wherein at least said section carries at least one elongate compliant member that is configured to be bent to shape at least said section into said desired configuration and maintain said desired configuration.

19. A method for obtaining a resting metabolic rate of an individual, comprising:

placing the individual in a resting position;

coupling a breathing apparatus and conduit in communication therewith in flow communication between an airway of the individual and an apparatus for monitoring the individual's respiration; and

manipulating at least a portion said conduit into a desired configuration, said conduit being configured so as to substantially maintain said desired configuration.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said coupling comprises:
coupling said breathing apparatus in substantially fluid-tight connection to at least a mouth of the
individual; and
coupling said conduit in substantially fluid tight communication to said apparatus.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein said manipulating comprises at least one of at
least partially longitudinally collapsing locations of at least said portion and at least partially
longitudinally expanding locations of at least said portion.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein said manipulating comprises bending at least
one elongate compliant member carried upon a wall of at least said portion.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein, upon said manipulating, said conduit at least
partially supports said breathing apparatus.

24. The method of claim 19, further comprising substantially restricting respiration
through a nose of the individual.